

REMARKS

Claims 1 – 4, 6 – 21, and 23 – 26 are now pending in the application. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejection(s) in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

DRAWINGS

Figures 11 and 12 stand objected to because they do not carry the label “Prior Art”. Applicants have attached revised drawings for the Examiner’s approval. In the “Replacement Sheets”, Figures 11 and 12 have been amended to add the label “Prior Art”. Favorable consideration of these drawings changes is respectfully requested.

The drawings also stand objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a) because the Examiner alleges that the drawings must show every feature of the claimed invention. Specifically, the Examiner has requested that the “alignment layer formed inside a region of the substrate delimited by the sealant” be shown in the drawings or cancelled from the claims. Applicants respectfully point the Examiner to Figures 5(A) and 5(B), where it can be seen that the alignment layers 13 and 23 are formed inside a region 41 of the substrates 1 and 2 that is delimited by the sealant 3. As such, this objection to the drawings should be moot.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 1 – 21 and 23 - 24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point and distinctly claim the

subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner alleges that the limitation “an alignment layer formed on the electrodes and inside the region delimited by the sealant” is indefinite because it is unclear how the alignment layer can be formed inside the sealant region, and also be formed to overlap the sealant region and to cross or cover the sealant region. Notwithstanding, claims 1, 10, 17, 23, and 24 have been amended to call for an alignment layer formed on the electrodes and covering the inner region delimited by the sealant, wherein the alignment layer is formed from the inner region to an intermediate portion of a sealant region on which the sealant is formed, along a side of the sealant provided with the terminals. These claims have also been amended to call for the an alignment layer that crosses over the sealant region to an outer side of the sealant, along a side of the sealant other than the side provided with the terminals. These limitations are fully supported by the specification and drawings as filed. No new matter has been added.

Specifically, Figures 5(A), 5(B) and 6 depict these features of the claims. That is, these figures depict that the alignment layers 13 and 23 are formed to cover an inner region 41 delimited by the sealant 3. The alignment layers 13 and 23 also shown to be formed from the inner region to an intermediate portion of the sealant region 3, along a side of the sealant provided with the terminals, as can be seen in Figure 6 near the edge of the substrate 201. Further, it can be seen, specifically in Figure 5(B), that the alignment layers 13 and 23 cross over the sealant region 3 to an outer side of the sealant, along a side of the sealant other than the side provided with the terminals.

Since these features are clearly disclosed by the drawings of the claimed invention, Applicants respectfully assert that the claimed invention called for in claims 1-21 and 23-24 is not indefinite. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 10, 17, 23 and 24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicants' admitted prior art (AAPA) in view of Katsuya (U.S. Pat. No. 6,507,381). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner alleges that although the AAPA does not expressly disclose either terminals formed on each of the substrates for conducting between the substrates or alignment layers that are formed to partially overlap and cross (or cover) the sealant, Katsuya teaches, in Figure 2, a liquid crystal panel 10 in which alignment films 12a and 12b are formed to partially overlap the sealer forming region 15. As such, it would have been obvious to those skilled in the art to arrange the alignment layers to partially overlap and to cover or cross the sealant forming regions as called for in claims 1, 10, 17, 23, and 24 to enlarge the display region of the liquid crystal panel.

As stated above in the rebuttal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, however, Claims 1, 10, 17, 23, and 24, have been amended to call for an alignment layer formed on the electrodes and covering the inner region delimited by the sealant, wherein the alignment layer is formed from the inner region to an intermediate portion of a sealant region on which the sealant is formed, along a side of the sealant provided with the terminals. These claims have also been amended to call for the an alignment layer that

crosses over the sealant region to an outer side of the sealant, along a side of the sealant other than the side provided with the terminals.

The proposed combination of the AAPA and Katsuya does not yield such a configuration. More specifically, referring to Figure 2 of Katsuya, it can be seen that the alignment layers 12a and 12b merely extend to an edge of the sealer 15. Katsuya's alignment layers 12a and 12b, however, do not cross over from the sealer 15 to an outer side of the sealer 15, along a side of the sealer 15 other than the side provided with the terminals, as claimed. There is also no teaching, suggestion, or motivation in Katsuya to utilize such a configuration.

Further, neither the AAPA nor Katsuya teach, suggest, or provide motivation to have a configuration wherein the alignment layer is formed from the inner region to an intermediate portion of a sealant region on which the sealant is formed, along a side of the sealant provided with the terminals, as claimed. Since the AAPA and Katsuya do not teach, suggest, or provide motivation for such a liquid crystal panel, the claimed invention would not have been obvious.

Claims 2 – 9, 11 – 16, and 18 – 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over AAPA and Katsuya as applied to claims 1, 10, 17, 23 and 24 above, and further in view of US 5,150,239 (Watanabe et al).

Claims 2-9, 11-16, and 18-21 are dependent on claims 1, 10, 17, 23, and 24, addressed above. These claims are not obvious for at least the same reasons.

NEW CLAIM

New claims 25 and 26 have been added and are dependent on claims 1 and 17, respectively. These claims are fully supported by the specification and drawings as filed. No new matter has been added. Favorable consideration of these new claims is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

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